Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never.

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome.

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍi-nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly.

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 178 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 011 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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[facing p. 5]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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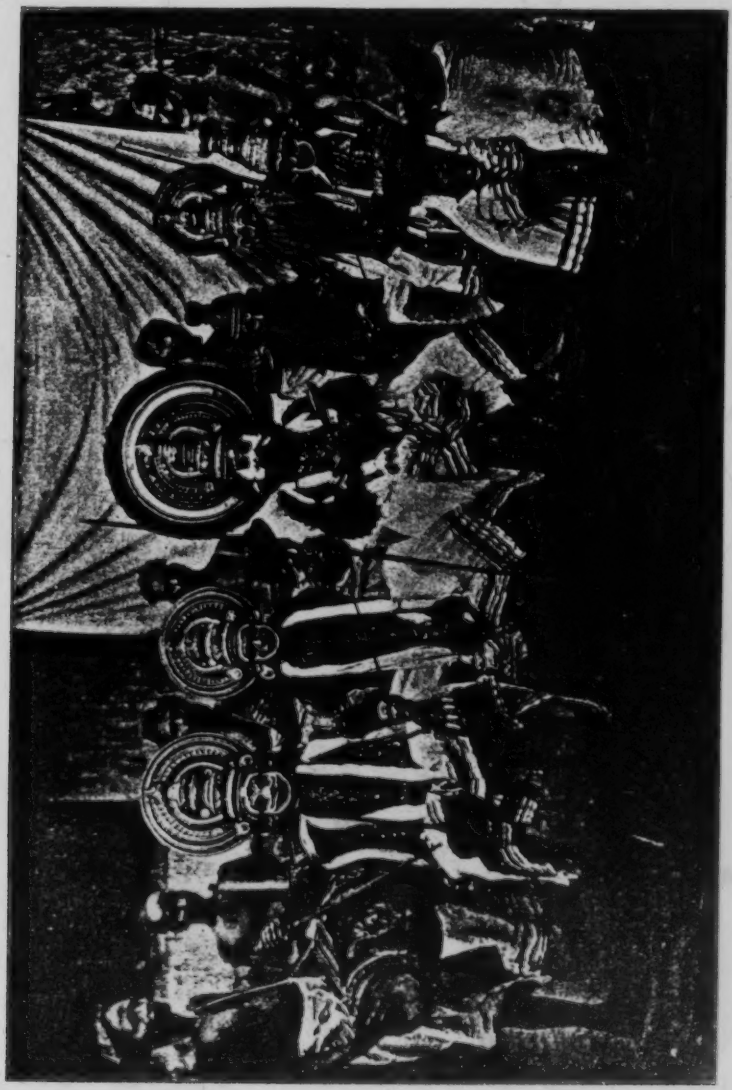

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CHARACTERS OF MALABAR DRAMA (KATHA KALI).

[facing p. 65]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

177
342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and
178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same
[343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated
[312] tank for bathing purposes often full of fish and water lilies, a
[515] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman
[574] travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family
[343] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with
[245] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing
[175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean.
[556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-
[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

243 Area yielding one crop—205·23 acres.
Area yielding two crops—448·01 acres.
There are a few acres yielding three crops, but only two crops are assessed.

There are different kinds of paddy, each having different periods of growth, and specially suited to particular soils. The fields are manured and in some cases slightly ploughed just before the rains in summer. The south-west monsoon usually begins in June and lasts for four months. As soon as the rain comes, lands are ploughed and paddy is sown in particularly favourable areas. Then all the fields of the farmer are well ploughed and manured; the seedlings are replanted over the whole area after a growth of twenty-eight days. Some kinds of paddy grow for sixty days, others eighty and ninety days. The system in which no replantation takes place is also in much vogue. The fields are protected from animal or bird pests; after a period of at most three months the paddy is mown by agricultural workers who separate the paddy from the stalks.

Another crop is also generally sown during the north-east monsoon season (October and November) which usually gives rain for about one month.

[407] The ploughs used are primitive and old-fashioned. The furrowing is done in this wise:—a flat piece of iron sharpened at one end is attached to a wooden frame with a handle; this handled frame is attached by means of a pole to a yoke which is placed on the neck of a pair of oxen or buffaloes; the worker then holds the handle and drives the oxen round and round the field until the whole field is well furrowed over. This is done *before* the heavy rain, when the ground is softened, but not under water. The sod is then crushed by means of sticks, this being generally done by females. The women walk in a row, beating the sod to and fro with heavy sticks held in one hand. After the field has been well watered by rains it is once more worked over by means of a log of wood (levelling board) drawn by oxen.

[412] The other agricultural implements used are the sickle, a big knife and spades.

231 *Stock.*—The following is the official census of the stock:—

Working oxen	245
Cows	289
Male buffaloes	361
Cow buffaloes	20
Young stock—	
Calves	169
Young buffaloes	7
Horses	2
Donkeys and mules	22
Sheep and goats	583

Oxen are used to drag carts, and for ploughing the fields. Most of the oxen here appear to be lean and weak; especially those used in ploughing. Cart-drawing oxen are better.

234 Cows are used for milking only, though the Muhammadans of the locality are not averse to eating beef now and then. The milk, buttermilk and ghee of the cow are in great demand especially among the Brahmans who cannot do without them; the lower

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave 452 it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw.

[428]

* [i.e., a Navar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

412

(7) pestle and mortar for husking rice,

(8) (for coconut cultivation) a long broad knife with blade and handle each 1 foot long (this serves all purposes),

(9) an implement intermediate between an axe and mamoti, with a thick sharp blade, and a fairly long handle, used for cutting wood, etc.,

(10) a basket, with ropes attached at both sides, worked by two men, to transfer water from a tank or from one field to another,

(11) a form of picotah, worked by a man standing on a platform inside the well, with his hands,

(12) the ordinary bullock lift,

(13) a sharp rod fixed in the earth for removing the outer cover of the coconut,

(14) ropes tied circularly for the purpose of climbing the coconut tree.

231

Stock—

Working oxen	922*
Cows	220
Male buffaloes	503*
Cow ,, ...	221
Young stock	1,103
Horses	7
Donkeys and mules	...
Sheep and goats	1,305
Pigs	20

There are 112 carts.

The cattle are fed on dry paddy straw, coconut fodder, waste powdered rice mixed with water, and grass in the winter season. The feeding of cattle is very carelessly done. They keep their skins and bones only.

237

Manuring.—Cattle dung is used for three purposes :—

(1) For cleaning the whole house. Hindus believe that the sprinkling of cattle dung water purifies the house. Consequently, every day every house is thus cleaned.

(2) For fuel. Chaff mixed with straw and dung is dried and burnt for culinary purposes. All the dung from cows kept by the non-agricultural classes (nearly every family of means keeps a cow for milk) is used in the above ways.

[241]

(3) The dung produced among the agricultural classes is used for manure, not for paddy or coconut, but for the cultivation of vegetables. Very little dung is used for the cultivation of chief crops. The wastage is also large. Perhaps one-fourth of the total dung is used for manuring vegetables. All the rest is used as stated above or wasted. A small portion of the cattle urine is collected in pots and used as manure for vegetables, but nearly all is wasted.

241

Fish and muddy water are used as manure for coconuts, but not to a very great extent, and only by the three rich kanomdars who themselves cultivate. Some also use salt for manure, when they plant coconut. This is very advantageous, and sometimes

* [This shows the very high proportion of one working ox or buffalo for each acre of cultivated land, a proportion accounted for by what is stated about the condition of the animals.—Ed.]